

Notches on The Stick

"The House of Armour" is a story of Nova Scotia, by a Nova Scotian lady, Marshall Saunders, author of "Beautiful Joe," "Daisy," "Charles and his Lamb," etc. Halifax is the scene, and the local descriptions are frequently graphic and well given. This may not be the great Canadian novel that is confidently looked for, and which is not yet at hand; but at least it is an interesting and stirring story, which detains the reader to the last page, and if you think so, there is a moral in it, or more than one. We will not spoil the interest to the plot-seeker by giving the authoress away; but will, instead, indicate briefly some of the characters who figure prominently. There is Stanton, master of the House of Armour, most destitute of heart and sentiment, but badly iced over, though compelled to renounce at the last his chill of reserve under the persistent influence of love. Then Stargarde, his half-sister, an angel of purity and mercy about town, who precedes the Salvation army in the city, and is herself a Salvation army. She is one who suffers long and is kind, and the vicious and miserable come to bless her; but, in spite of love, she refuses marriage, lest she be drawn from her high vocation. Brian Camperdown, with his horse, Polypharmacy, is never far away from her, which argues sensibility on his part. Camperdown is a physician and surgeon in the city, a jewel in the rough, who unites much real kindness to strong practical sense, and becomes the at length successful wooer of Stargarde.

The types are taken from various of the races forming the heterogeneous population of Acadia, who play their destined parts in the development of the story. We have "Mammy Juniper," the black sibyl of the story, with her muttered oracles; and Mic-Mac Joe, with his "kissum," "huggum," "marryum," and other broken forms of English, retainers of the House of Armour; but the true star of that demesne's amended fortune is Vivienne Delavigne, the beautiful French Acadian, high-spirited, passionate, capable of self-renouncing affection, a pattern both of filial and of conjugal constancy. Of the Irish, Mrs. Macartney, with her bluff, hearty ways and speech, and her son Captain Macartney.

Of menally deformed and diseased types we have several: the Hibernian MacDaly, or "Stitanglebag," with his rather lofty sounding name and style, an impecunious rascal, when sober, and with a streak of the buffoon; Valentine Armour, the musical Whelp, whose follies lead to blindness; Colonel Armour, who builds his house with wrong, and comes to shame; Mrs. Colmibel and her daughter Judy; Zeb or Zilla, and the Frisips, etc. A note of patriotic pride gives distinction to the story. A good example of the author's style may be taken from Chapter XXXII, "The Ghost Flower."

"Me no diggum up," said Joe decidedly. "He stood knee deep in pale green ferns growing among heavy shadows formed by interlacing branches of trees overhead, his eyes fixed on a group of herially white flowers springing up from the richest of leaf-mould on a mossy bank at a little distance from him."

Vivienne knelt by the wax like cluster of flower interrogation points in speechless delight, while Armour stood above her saying in quiet amusements, "Way don't you dig it up, Joe?"

"Callum ghos' flower," said Joe doggedly; "spirit angry when toucham. Com' way Miss Debbiline."

"His voice was really concerned, but Vivienne looked at him with a gay laugh and continued to touch with caressing fingertips the beautiful unearthly flower, which was furnished with colorless bracts instead of green leaves."

"If I were to wear a few of these to the drawing room my decoration would be unique, would it not?" she said to Armour. "Decidedly unique," he said. "Have you ever heard any poetry about this curious flower?"

"No, never." "Then let me repeat to you some exquisite lines by a Canadian poet, impressed by observing that the stalks and blossoms form interrogation points. Remember that this determines the cast of the sonnet," and he recited with great taste:

"Like Israel's seer I come from out the earth,
Confronting with the question air and sky,
Why dost thou bring me up? White ghost am I
Of that which was God's beauty at the birth.
Is old the sun kissed me to ruby red,
I hold my chalice up to heaven's full view,
The August stars dropped down their golden dew
The sky-bells bled out about my bed.
Alas, I loved the darkness, not the light;
The deadly shadows, not the bending blue,

Much in Little

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"Spoke to my tranced heart, made false seem true,
And drowned my spirit in the depths of night.
O Painter of the flowers, O God, most sweet,
Dost say my spirit for the light is meet?"

"Alas, the poor flower!" said Vivienne. "Like some mortals it loved darkness rather than the light."

And yet how touching the final question. "Yes," said Armour quietly, "a regret has been born even among the deadly shadows."

"Will you not repeat me some more of those things that you repeat so well?" asked Vivienne demurely.

Bareheaded and standing with his back against a tree, Armour murmured to her the praises of another fairy glen in far distant Wales, a place peopled with shy winds.

Whose faithful plumes waft dewy balm
From a l' he wilderness, and let fall
An incommunicable calm."

"Then dropping on his knees on the ground he said, 'Give me your clasp knife, Joe.'"

"Me no give you big knife," said the superstitious Christmas; "me afraid for Miss Debbiline. Spirits killum it touch ghos' flower," and he retreated farther among the ferns.

"Armour laughed as he bent his light head over the flower that he was about to wrest from its home among the 'sweet wood's golden glooms.'"

"Do you think it will grow if we plant it in the greenhouse?" asked Vivienne, as she watched her lover carefully insinuating a sharp pointed stone among the decayed leaves of many seasons.

"I scarcely think so, but we can try it," and Armour carefully carrying the fragile ghost flower in his handkerchief walked by her side down the woodland path to the shore of a tiny cove where Joe's canoe lay drawn up on the grass."

The style is sometimes too diffuse, as it seems to us; and the volume might have been profitably lessened by the exclusion of a good many conversational common-places.

The first of the "New York Nocturnes" in the "Bookman" for February, sounds a note of pathos. There is many an exile from home and native land whose heart will throb in sympathy with that of Prof. Roberts.

A Nocturne of Exile.

Out of this night of lonely noise
The city's crowded cries,
Home of my heart, to thee, to thee
I turn my longing eyes.

Years, years, how many years, I want
To exile wearily.
Before I lifted up my face
And saw my home in thee!

I had come home to thee at last
I saw thy warm lights gleam,
I entered the abiding joy—
O was it but a dream?

Ere I could reckon with my heart
The sun of our delight,
I was an exile once again
Here in the hasting night.

The doors were shut. The lights were gone
From my remembering eyes.
Only the city's endless throng;
Only the crowded cries.

A Nocturne of Trysting.

Broods the hid glory in its sheath of gloom
Till strikes the destined hour, and bursts the bloom,
A rapture of wh to passion and perfume.

So the long day is like a bud
That aches for coming bliss,
Till flowers in light the wondrous night
That brings me to thy kiss.

Delicate children! What a source of anxiety they are! The parents wish them hearty and strong, but they keep thin and pale.

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Then, with a thousand sorrows forgotten in one hour,
In thy pure eyes and at thy feet I find at last my goal;
And life and joy and hope seem but a faint prevision
Of the flower,
That is thy body and the flame that is thy soul.
CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

The appreciative reader of Matthew Arnold's tribute to Henri Heine, will recall his description of the grave of that poet: you give Montmartre:

"Henri Heine—'tis love!
That black tombstone, the name
Carved there."

The spot is somewhat changed, and though still there may come to the visitor who pauses there, as to Arnold, "the faint murmur of Paris outside," and he may see "Crisp everlasting flowers" "Yellow and black, on the graves."

the resting-place of Germany's great lyric poet bears not the old trace of neglect. For a time her lover was left with nature alone, and no monument, other than "that black tombstone," bore his name. Now a splendid memorial from the hand of the Danish sculptor, Hasselriis, marks the spot where he rests, and, whether fondly or no, the poet's name is admirably remembered. Lonely in his painful life, and lonely in his grave, as it is often the lot of genius to be, there are some who cannot forget him, nor the couch where he lay and agonized, while shrivelled to child-like proportions, and which he sweetened with his singing as with perfume, before coming to this couch of earth, where there is silence.

It is hinted that the correspondence of Robert Burns and Mrs. Dunlop, so long withheld from the loving students of that poet, is yet in existence, and will soon be given to the public. Some of Burns' letters of course we have, which were delivered to Carrie for publication, but about thirty were withheld, and all of the lady's, so that the data for the estimation of the poet can hardly yet be termed complete. As Mrs. Dunlop was one to whom the poet was wont to unbosom himself, and who evoked the best and noblest of his sentiments, it may be expected that these letters will illustrate in far more some parts of his career that are yet obscure. It is stated by the "Bookman," that they reveal as a fact that an effort was made to secure for him a position as a professor in the University of Edinburgh. If such an effort was unsuccessful it is no matter of wonder. These documents have long been in possession of the descendants of Mrs. Dunlop, from whom they have been obtained by Mr. R. B. Adam, of Buffalo, N. Y.; and Mr. William Wallace, editor of the latest edition of Chambers' Life of Burns, will give them to the public, with such elucidation as the text may require.

Zion's Herald, Boston, and The Christian Advocate, New York, have both, following the lead of several of the religious weeklies, appeared in magazine form, enlarged and printed from new type. Zion's Herald, sometimes ago began the use of illustrations; and The Advocate now adds to its attractiveness by the same popular method. It is needless to say that both of these journals are among the first and foremost in methodism. Than James M. Buckley it is questionable whether there is an abler religious editor in America today.

PASTOR FELIX.

INDIANS DO NOT BROKEN HIGH.

How \$348 was "Heap Plenty" in Settlement of a Claim for \$3,000.

It is not easy now to cheat the Indians in bargaining as it was in the days when Manhattan Island was bought from them for \$23. Their long intercourse with the white man has taught them many things about the value of their possessions, and they are pretty sharp in making the ordinary trapes which come up in their daily life. Nevertheless, it is still true that when it comes to a question of large sums of money—thousands or even hundreds of dollars—the average Indian is bewildered at the mere idea of so much wealth. An incident which happened not long ago in New Mexico illustrates this point.

An Indian while crossing the tracks of one of the railroads had been killed by a train. His squaw demanded \$3,000 as an indemnity for the loss of her husband, and the company were willing to settle the matter. So they sent to deal with the squaw a man who had considerable experience in negotiating with the Indians. He took with him several bags of "dobs" or Mexican silver dollars, which pass freely among the Indians and settlers in that part of the country. Sitting down gravely with the aggrieved widow, he began counting out the big pile of dollars one by one. When the pile had reached a hundred he glanced inquiringly at the squaw. But she shook her head firmly. The agent went on with his counting. At the end of another hundred he looked again. The squaw repeated the negative shake of her head. At 300 the agent paused a little

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longer. His customer still held out, though with unmistakable signs of weakening. The agent counted more slowly and impressively. When he reached \$348 the squaw stopped his hand.

"Heap plenty, heap plenty," she said with decision, and gathering up the silver she accepted in perfect contentment this settlement of her claim for \$3,000.—New York Tribune.

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MRS. A. ALLEN, Ramsay, Ont.

Too Great a Sacrifice.

"I'll tell you how we can patch that tire." The speaker was a young man. His companion was a young woman. They were taking a tandem ride in the country. The rear tire of the machine had received a puncture, and a hasty examination of the tool-bag revealed the fact that the repair "kit" had been left behind. For a moment the youth was in despair, but as he studied the situation his brow cleared.

"I'll tell you how you can patch it!" he repeated.

"Well?" "It's a simple operation. See this?" He removed a yard of ribbon from the front handle bar.

"Yes, I see it. You don't think you can mend a puncture with that do you?" asked the incredulous girl.

"Well, I should remark. You're chewing a piece of gum, aren't you?" "Yes."

"Well," and he brushed the dust from the punctured spot, "you put that chunk of gum right here, over that tiny hole. I wind this ribbon tightly around the whole business as many times as it will go, tie it on top of the rim, inflate the tire, we get on again, and finish our ride, just as if nothing had happened. See?"

There was an ominous silence.

It was broken at last by the young woman.

"This is the only piece of gum I've got," she said, in a constrained voice. "We'll walk home."

This they did—and not another word was spoken.

Distance, six miles.

The hapless young man had asked altogether too much.—Youths Companion.

The Lily and the Ancients.

Most everybody has observed the strange characteristic of the water lily bud opening its petals at sunrise and closing them again at sunset. It was for this reason mainly that the ancients held the water lily sacred to the sun. Pliny says: "It is reported that in the the Euphrates the flower of the lotus plunges into the water at night, remaining there till midnight, and to a depth that it cannot be reached with the hand. After midnight it begins gradually to rise, and as the sun rises above the horizon the flower also rises above the water expands and raises itself some distance above the element in which it grows." It was also through this peculiarity that Hancockville proved that the Egyptians considered the lily an emblem of the world as it rose from the waters of the deep.

Untrammelled Flights.

"Ah, me," sighed the poetess of passion. "I would be free as a bird."

"Well," said the practical individual, "you've got half your wish anyhow, m'am. You're a bird all right."

In the Same Condition.

"Can you let me have a five-spot for a few days?" asked the New Yorker of his Boston friend. "I'm dead broke."

"Sorry," was the Bostonian's reply "I also suffer from a fatal fracture."

The New Cupid.

"I asked her to wear love's fetters for me."

"What did she say?"

"She said she couldn't think of it—that everything was chainless now-a-days."

If our eyes were brighter, the stars would be brighter.

